

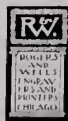
FAM.
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The New Mission Hospital

Madura,
India



FRONT VIEW
THE HOSPITAL WAS ERECTED WITH FUNDS CONTRIBUTED
ALMOST ENTIRELY BY HINDUS





THE missionaries of the American Madura Mission have always, since the foundation of the mission in 1834, made the medical work prominent. They have believed that in no one other single way could be made so plain to the minds of our people the real love and philanthropy of the Christian religion. To heal the body and relieve its sufferings was Christ's way. Nearly all of his miracles were acts of healing.

I began my labors as a medical missionary in 1888 in Madura India. I had not been in Madura long before I needed a new hospital. To make a long story short—I have such a hospital; and it was built with funds raised entirely in India. I wish to recount in these pages some of the circumstances connected with the erection of this commodious hospital building

There were many persons who assisted me in this enterprise. The photos of a few of these men I have been able to obtain (while home on my furlough in America) and these I reproduce in this book. I much regret the absence from these pages the faces of many whose photos I do not have. Had it not been for the help given by these men this hospital would never have been erected. I owe these men my most grateful thanks.

It was in 1893 that I began to plan actively for a new hospital. It was desperately needed. The little old building was totally inadequate for the comfort of the patients. I early consulted my friend Mr. V. Bashya Chariar Avergal.

On the occasion of a visit of that superlatively good-hearted and generous Native Prince, the Rajah of Ramnad, to Madura in 1893, Mr. Bashya Chariar

and I called on him and explained the pressing need of a new hospital. The Rajah said at once, "I have set aside a sum of 6,000 rupees to build a bathing ghat near the Madura bridge. I will abandon this project and hand the money over for this other enterprise which appeals to me more strongly." This was the first (and largest single) subscription given.

Just about this time a providentially fortunate case of a rich Nattakotta Chettyar being relieved of a serious illness, brought to our hospital the friendship not only of this man but of many other Chettyars belonging to this wealthy and generous caste. These Nattakotta Chettyars have invited me to their villages several times and on each of three occasions have given for the hospital Rs 5,000; on other occasions less sums have been given. They have given in the aggregate about 24,000 rupees for the construction of this new building.

A visit such as I have taken several times to Chettyar villages is so interesting, so full of hardship yet full also of pleasure, that I detail here one or two such visits.

Tirupatur is a town about forty miles from Madura. It is not a village of Chettyars but is a largish and important town near several rich villages. One day in January, 1896, I, having received an invitation from leading Chettyars

of several of these villages, to come and visit them, started. Taking with me a servant, a few cooking utensils and some rugs and pillows, I was off one afternoon at about four o'clock. Tirupatur is forty miles distant from Madura.



To those accustomed to travel in the United States, forty miles seems a short distance. But in India we look upon every mile as a matter to be taken into consideration. The jutka bandy is one of our means of travelling about the Madura district. The little native ponies are illy formed but they have much endurance, and the jutka is our most rapid means of getting about. On this



trip as on other trips I had two of these jutka bandies, one for myself and one for the luggage. Stopping every few miles to rest the ponies, I reached the town of Tirupatur about daybreak the next morning.

In India one likes to travel during the night time as much as possible in order to avoid the almost unbearable heat of the sun.

I took some rest and refreshment and then saw the four leading lawyers of the place, Mr. Seshy Iyer, Mr. Adiratanam Pillay, Mr. Narayasamy Iyer and Mr. Vencata Iyer.

I should explain here that while the Chettyars in any given village are united and friendly, yet in each village there were num-

bers of Chettyars who had not seen our medical work and had perhaps not even heard of it. These were ready enough to give when they were convinced that the hospital was a good thing, but they needed to be convinced.

Lawyers in any country in the world are men of influence, and this is particularly true of India.

These lawyers of Tirupatur readily agreed to accompany me to several villages. They not only gave their services for the hospital but would not accept expenses of travel.

I felt most encouraged by their kind and liberal spirit. These men, devout Hindus, entered into my plans for erecting this Christian hospital as though it were their own personal matter.

I shall never forget the warm-hearted reception these lawyers gave me nor the large-hearted kindness with which the Lessees bungalow at Tirupatur was placed at my disposal by Mr. Millar, who sent word



ahead to his employees in Tirupatur. These men had the bungalow not only open for my reception, but decorated and refreshments ready on my arrival.

There is many a slip 'twixt laying out a plan to gather a good sum of money, and really gathering it. When one sets out, having his heart in his mouth, most anxious as to whether he is to succeed or not, knowing very well that fair promises fail about as often as they succeed, it is an unspeakable comfort to have the first step a delightful reception and everyone with him.

I will never forget with what doubt and misgiving and uncertainty I drove into the town of Tirupatur at that early morning hour that January day; and with what pleasure I started back to Madura a few days later bearing gifts of over Rs 5,000.

It is impossible for anyone to have had the experiences which I have had in the Madura and Tinnevely Districts and not love these men.

To recount a few of our experiences. The lawyers named above, and I, consulted as to the best plan of meeting the Chettys in their villages. A plan was laid out. We had six or seven villages to visit. In some villages we were to spend an entire day. In other cases we could visit two villages in one day.

We were to start the next day. That next morning as I was up and about very early, it was about 2 a. m., I was deeply touched to see lights moving and bullocks being tied into bandies and all arrangements actively being made at the homes of those lawyers to go with me. One would naturally suppose that I would be the one to go and call them and remind them of our plan. But those men were the soul of punctuality and even in the sleepy hours of the night needed not a word of arousing on my part. As I drove past their houses they called out to me, "go right along, we are ready."

We reached, at about daylight, the Chettyar village to which we had set out. Here we were most kindly received. Those who did not know me, knew the





MR. G. STRINAVASA ROW
AVERGAL

lawyers. We were soon all friends. They needed but a few words of explanation of our errand, and to be made sure that the hospital was a good thing, when they gave a lump sum of a thousand rupees. This is \$330, but its purchasing power in India is far greater than the purchasing power of \$330 in the United States.

The next day we visited a priest, a devout Hindu, the head of a large temple fourteen miles from Tirupatur. This orthodox Hindu gave 500 rupees to our Christian hospital. This was one of the most interesting gifts made at any time to my medical work and shows the broad-mindedness of

the Hindus. So we went on from village to village, receiving everywhere the same splendid treatment, and in a few days the 5,000 rupees had been given.

I would like to mention one other trip. It was perhaps a year after the one mentioned above. Mr. A. L. A. L. Ramasamy Chettyar was one of the best friends the hospital had in South India.

He was a warm-hearted and generous man and had in large measure those qualities which men demand in a leader. He was in fact one of the leaders among the Chettyars, sharing his position with a few other men in the surrounding villages. I have recently learned with deep regret of his death.

Mr. Ramasamy Chettyar was in Madura one day, and in conversation about the hospital asked about our finances. I told him that I still needed 7,000 rupees and was in trouble over it. He said "you come down to Devakotta (that was his village, distant about sixty miles from Madura) and I will use my influ-



MR. V. BASHYA CHARIAR
AVERGAL



THE ZEMINDAR AVERGAL
OF PERIYUR

ence and we will help you again, but you must bring Mr. Bashya Chariar." I had previously visited Devakotta at Mr. Ramasamy Chettyar's kind invitation, when 3,500 rupees had been given for the hospital.

I went immediately over to Mr. Bashya Chariar's, most anxious lest he would say he could not go, as the journey was a most wearisome one, and I knew him to be quite overdone with heavy legal work. What he did say, as he energetically snapped his fingers, was, "I'll go." "But," he added, "I can't go till courts close for the summer recess." This would bring the time into May, one of our very hot months. But

unbearably hot as it was, and quite jaded out as he was with overwork, he was ready to start the next day after courts closed.

It was a warm but beautiful night, the time was ten o'clock, the full moon was about two hours high, when we started from Madura.

The experiences of the next few days will never fade from my memory. We reached Devakotta the next evening at nine o'clock. The Chettyars were most kind. Mr. Ramasamy Chettyar used his influence for us and gave a generous sum from his own purse. We were visiting among those several hospitable villages seventeen days. One of the Chettyars of Kanadukathan sent us word, "Come to us—and so far as our village is concerned the matter will be settled in no time." A meeting was held and a thousand rupees was handed us after a few minutes. I wish there were time to describe all the kindness we received. It was not



REV. J. P. JONES, D. D.



HIS EXCELLENCY SIR ARTHUR HAVELOCK
G.C.M.G. G.C.I.E.
GOVERNOR OF MADRAS

BY PERMISSION



HIS HIGHNESS THE RAJAH AVERGAL
OF RAMNAD



MR. T. VARADA ROW
AVERGAL

only the kindness but the way it was extended to us.

Rs 5,000 was given.

It was from that same village of Kanadukathan that a Chettyar wrote me recently while on my furlough in the United States, "All that we have done is not even worth mentioning." I speak of this to show with what a delightful abandon of goodness they fail to appreciate their own acts of generosity.

I wish there were time to describe in detail a trip which I took in company with another splendid friend of the hospital, Mr. K Amasamy Iyer. These trips to collect funds, though hard in some ways were among

the pleasantest experiences of my life — they were so hard, so anxious and in the end so successful.

I wish now to speak of the Zemindars, or Native Princes, of the Madura and Tinnevely Districts. These men have also assisted our hospital most liberally and shown the kindest and largest spirit. The Zemindar of Periyur is one of the prominent men among this wealthy class. We owe much to him. The Zemindars are naturally public spirited and always ready, with open purses, to forward all movements for the public good. The Zemindars are second only to the rich Chettyars in the generous sums given for the hospital. I shall never forget their valuable and timely aid and wish to express my abiding appreciation of it.

The new hospital is a large two-story building; the foundations are of stone, the superstructure is of brick, rubbed over with



THE HON. R. RAMASUBBAIYER
AVERGAL



MR. A. L. A. R. RAMASAMY CHETTYAR
AVERGAL

white polished plaster. A veranda ten feet wide surrounds the building on all sides. The cost has been Rs 42,000 or \$14,000. Not a dollar of American money was used in its construction.

During the last year before I came home on furlough, there were treated in the hospital, in-patients and out-patients, 18,000, and 1,308 major and minor surgical operations were performed.

Patients attend the hospital from a distance of from twenty to sixty miles.

A few words as to how the hospital is supported.

Everyone who knows anything about medical work knows that it is a costly matter to carry on a hospital.

Our new hospital was opened by His Excellency, Sir A. E. Havelock, G. C. M. G., G. C. I. E., Governor of Madras, while on a tour through South India in 1897. After His Excellency had seen this result of private enterprise and become convinced that we were doing a good work, the Madras government (always generous) has been perhaps more than ever ready to sanction grants made by the Madura Municipality and District Board. Whenever I have asked for an increased grant from government funds the Municipal Councillors and members of the District Board have been ever kind. We receive yearly from Government for this hospital (and our woman's hospital) Rs 1,500. We receive also a mis-



DR. VAN ALLEN

sion grant of Rs 1,000 yearly. Thank offerings from the patients amounted last year to Rs 2,400. There is a grant, too, from the Shivaganga Mahamai fund of Rs 250 (a purely native charity fund) and the Shivaganga Lessees, an English syndicate, generously give an annual sum of Rs 500.

The Nardars, too, of which Mr. Somasundram Nardar is one of the leaders, assist us.

The above sources of income nearly support the hospital.

My native assistants are nine in number. Without their faithful help I could not carry on the work. I wish to especially emphasize their faithfulness. The hospital during my absence is in charge of my Dresser or Hospital Assistant.

In conclusion I must say that I have been overwhelmingly and charmingly impressed with the generosity of the Hindus. I have had literally double handfuls of rupees turned over to me for the new hospital. I have had contributions of money placed in huge piles on the table in my bungalow, in one case numbering 3,500 from one man, the late generous Zemindar of Seithur. This is a different 3,500 than that mentioned above. One Native Prince gave, as mentioned, 6,000 rupees. Contributions all the way from these larger sums down to the tiniest sums have been given—always with the same spirit.

Such is the spirit of the Hindus. I regret not being able to present here a larger number of the faces of those who have assisted me.

This sketch, too, is brief. A few representative experiences have been given as samples of numerous others.

To erect this building was a long pull and a hard pull; and I should not have been able to do it without the splendid help I have had.

Above all, the blessing of God has rested on the undertaking.





